

BOROUGH OF SOUTH MOLTON



Annual Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health
and Chief Sanitary Inspector

for the

Year ended December 31st, 1952.



113, East Street,

South Molton,

June, 1953.

To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and

Councillors of the Borough of South Molton

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

*I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the
Health and Sanitation Administration of the Borough for the
year 1952.*

Your obedient Servant,

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon).

Medical Officer of Health.

South Molton Borough

LIST OF STAFF.

The Staff of the Public Health Department consists of:—

Part-time Officers:—

F. J. H. MARTIN

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon.).

Medical Officer of Health.

Mrs. ELWORTHY, Clerk.

A. J. C. NEX, C.R.S.I.

Additional Sanitary Inspector.

Whole-time Officer:—

H. SETTLE, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,910
Population	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,019
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,026
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	...	£17,166
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	£64

Vital Statistics.

	Males	Females	Total
LIVE BIRTHS—Legitimate	35	13	48
Illegitimate	2	1	3
			<hr/> 51

Rate per 1,000 population 16.8

	Males	Females	Total
STILL BIRTHS—Legitimate	0	2	2
Illegitimate	0	0	0
			<hr/> 2

Rate per 1,000 Live and Still Births 37.7

DEATHS	...	...	...	...	38	21	59
Death Rate per 1,000 population							19.5.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.

				Males	Females	Total
Puerperal Sepsis	0
Other Puerperal Causes	0

I append below a Table showing the comparative figures for South Molton Borough and England and Wales.

The Local Birth Rate and the Local Death Rate are both shown corrected by the area comparability factors.

Rate per 1,000 population			Death Rate per 1,000 population	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhœa and Enteritis under 2 years
South Molton Borough	15.2	58.8	.0
England and Wales	11.3	27.6	1.1

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

				Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	3	0	3
Illegitimate	...	...	...	0	0	0
						<hr/> 3

Rate per 1,000 Live Births 58.8

Deaths of infants under 4 weeks.

				Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	3	0	3
Illegitimate	...	...	...	0	0	0
						<hr/> 3

Deaths from Measles (all ages) ...	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ...	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 years of age ...	...	...	...	...	0

Causes of Death during the year 1952.

					Males	Females
Respiratory Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	3	0
Malignant Neoplasm of Stomach	...	...	...	...	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm of Bronchus	...	...	...	...	1	0
Other Lymphatic and Malignant Neoplasm	...	...	...	...	1	2
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	...	...	...	...	3	4
Coronary Disease	...	...	...	...	3	0
Hypertension with Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	0	1
Other Heart Diseases	...	...	...	...	9	7
Other Circulatory Diseases	...	...	...	...	2	1
Influenza	...	...	...	...	2	1
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	2	0
Enteritis and Diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	0	1
Hyperplasia of Prostate	...	...	...	...	1	0
Other defined and ill defined Diseases	...	...	...	...	8	3
Suicides	...	...	...	...	2	0
					<hr/> 38	<hr/> 21

Tuberculosis—New Cases occurring during the year 1952.

Pulmonary 5—

Three were males, aged 6, 53 and 73 years. Two were females aged 2½ and 41 years.

Non Pulmonary 1—

A male, aged 39 years.

Cases of Infectious Diseases notified in 1952.

Age Years	Measles		Pneumonia	
	M	F	M	F
1—2	—	1	—	—
2—3	1	—	—	—
3—4	—	1	—	—
4—5	2	5	—	—
5—10	15	15	—	—
10—15	1	—	—	—
68	—	—	—	1
Totals	19	22	—	1

Local Deaths over 65 years of age.

65—69	...	...	3	85—89	...	...	0
70—74	...	...	9	90—94	...	...	2
75—79	...	...	10	95—100	...	...	0
80—84	...	...	7	Total	...	...	31

General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

1. TUBERCULOSIS.

Hawley Sanatorium, situated in the Borough of Barnstaple, has 29 beds.

2. MATERNITY CASES.

The Devon County Council are continuing to act as they did in 1949 as agents of the Regional Hospital Board until the Board has completed its own plans for the treatment of Maternity cases. The South Molton and District Cottage Hospital continues to function under the North Devon Hospital group and deals with a certain number of maternity cases. Four beds are set apart for these cases in the Hospital .

There is also a ward of 12 beds with a fully qualified staff at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, available for maternity cases of doubt and difficulty.

The General Practitioners' Maternity Unit of 13 beds is now open at "Highfield," Victoria Road, Barnstaple.

3. ISOLATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Cases are sent either to Whipton Hospital, near Exeter, or to the Bideford Isolation Hospital, which is situated just outside the Borough of Bideford. It is of recent construction and well equipped in every way for the treatment of Infectious Diseases. Changes in 1952 have resulted in 20 beds being available in cubicles for infectious cases and 12 beds in a separate block for early tuberculosis cases from North Devon.

4. SMALL POX.

The Small Pox Hospital, to which cases of Small Pox will be sent is at Upton Pine. Telephone to Isolation Hospital, Whipton, Exeter 67158, and this is the same number for the ambulance.

5. GENERAL.

The South Molton and District Cottage Hospital, situated in the Borough of South Molton serves this area. There are 10 beds for general and maternity cases. The North Devon Infir-

mary, situated in Barnstaple also serves the area and provides modern medical and surgical treatment. In South Molton there are 29 beds available at Beech House for the chronic sick.

6. CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

V.D. Clinic.—This is held at the Annexe of the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple.

Sessions.

Females Monday 4 p.m. Thursday 4.30 p.m.

Males Monday 5.15 p.m. Thursday 5.15 p.m.

Chest Clinic held at the North Devon Infirmary.

Tuesday	9. 0 a.m. - 1. 0 p.m.	}	Clinic and X-Ray Examinations
	2. 0 p.m. - 4. 0 p.m.		
Thursday	9. 0 a.m. - 1. 0 p.m.	}	
	2. 0 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.		
Friday	9. 0 a.m. - 1. 0 p.m.	}	A.P. Refills
	2. 0 p.m. - 4. 0 p.m.		

7. LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The main Laboratory is situated at 7, Dix's Field, Exeter, and Dr. Moore is the Director. It is completely installed with the necessary equipment for bacteriological examinations of all kinds. Its diagnostic and consultative services are available for all patients. Bacteriological examinations of water and milk are also carried out. The service is extremely valuable and is widely used by the medical practitioners.

There is also a Pathological Laboratory at the former Barnstaple and North Devon Dispensary building in Barnstaple with a full-time Pathologist and Technical Staff to meet the needs of the whole North Devon area.

The Blood Bank, which was formerly at the North Devon Infirmary has been transferred to this Laboratory.

8. AMBULANCE SERVICES.

Under Section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Local Health Authority (i.e. the Devon County Council) is responsible for the provision of an Ambulance Service, and the Devon Health Committee have arranged for this to be provided through the agency of the St. John Ambulance Association. Under the scheme an ambulance station has been established at South

Molton. The districts served are South Molton Borough and South Molton Rural District. The Hospital Car Service, also under the Devon County Council is available on application to the Hospitals, and the Ambulance Service is empowered to hire cars in urgent cases when an ambulance is not necessary.

9. IMMUNIZATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.

39 children received Primary Injections and 43 children received Reinforcing Injections.

10. VACCINATION.

The following are the figures for 1952:—

Under 1 year—8. 1-4 years—4. 5-14 years—0. 15 years and over—2.

11. HOME HELP SERVICE.

This service is under the supervision of Miss Williamson and refers to the Borough only. There are 5 Home Helps on the books. 6 cases were attended during the year as follows:—Midwifery 4; Tuberculosis 1; Paralysis Agitans 1; also Home Helps were provided for 4 midwifery cases who elected to pay privately.

This service I hope will grow as it is of great benefit to all concerned.

12. PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOMES.

There is one District Nurse in the Borough who also acts as a Midwife.

I desire to thank the Town Clerk, Mr. Settle and Mr. Nex for their valuable help to me.

F. J. H. MARTIN.

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Water Supply.

The supply is obtained from the gathering grounds on the foothills of Exmoor and from the Holywell Spring and is impounded in the Holywell Reservoir which contains approximately 7,000,000 gallons. It is piped therefrom to the Filter House at Westland Bridge and is passed through three Candy Pressure Filters and thence by trunk main of 6ins. diameter to the Service Reservoirs in North Road, South Molton, the Service Reservoirs being two in number and containing 340,000 gallons, the water is then distributed through the Town mains which are of varying diameters. The water is sampled and analysed at regular intervals. I am pleased to again report that I find that the Filters and the water supply system generally are maintained in a highly efficient manner by your Waterworks Foreman. Chlorination of the water is being carried out by the drip feed method at the Service Reservoirs and is proving to be fairly satisfactory. A Separate water supply has been provided to "Millbrook" Farm, North Molton, in order to conserve more water in Holywell Reservoir, and by reclaiming water from the leak in the tunnel of the Reservoir a plentiful supply of water has been maintained.

Results of Sampling and Analyses.

A total of 15 samples of water have been submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Exeter, and eight of these were placed in Grade One and the remainder in Grade Two and Three. These figures do not give cause for alarm as the number of samples falling below Grade One are very little below the standard for Grade One, and it is noted that recent samples have shown considerable improvement, which is no doubt due to the chlorination of the water at North Road Reservoirs.

Chemical Analysis.

Analytical Examination of Water.

Description of Sample.—Sample of water from Holywell Reservoir, North Molton. Received 11th June, 1952.

Characters.

Colour—Very slight green tint. *Turbidity*—Clear. *Taste*—Natural. *Odour*—None. *Suspended Matters*—Slight trace of humus of vegetation. A few diatoms and infusorians.

ANALYSIS—Year 1952.

(Parts per Hundred Thousand).

Chlorine present as Chlorides	...	...	...	...	1.0
Nitrogen present as Nitrites	...	...	...	...	0
Nitrogen present as Nitrates	...	...	...	...	0.095
Phosphates	...	...	...	...	0
Sulphates	...	...	...	...
Free Carbon Dioxide	...	...	...	...
Total Hardness equivalent to Calcium Carbonate	...				3.2
Temporary Hardness (annulled by boiling)	...	...			0.5
Permanent Hardness (not altered by boiling)	...	...			2.7
Saline Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0.0010
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0.0024
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours at 27 deg. C	...	...			0.02
Oxygen absorbed immediately	...	...	...	...
Lead	...	...	...	...	0
Copper	...	...	...	...	0
Zinc	...	...	...	...	0
Iron in solution	...	...	...	...	0
Iron in sedimentary form	...	...	...	...	0
Manganese	...	...	...	...	0
Total Solid Constituents	...	...	...	...	5.0
Organic Matter observed in igniting the Solid Constituents, none					
Hydrogen Ion Concentration equivalent to pH					6.4

Sewage Disposal.

The new Sewage Disposal Plant at Mole Bridge is very nearly completed and should be in full operation by the 30th April, 1953.

The Engineers are proceeding with the plans and specification for the second part of the sewerage scheme which will when completed provide for the treatment of sewage from the whole town.

Sewers.—The sewers in the Borough are generally in good order.

Housing.

24 Traditional Houses were erected and tenanted during the year. 8 Private Bungalows and Houses have been completed during the year.

110 Traditional Houses have been erected in the Borough since the end of World War II, 12 houses are in course of erection, and plans for a further 16 houses are now being prepared. For a Town of the size of South Molton progress has been very satisfactory indeed.

Plans.

32 Plans for new buildings and extensions have been dealt with under Planning and Byelaws during the year.

Sanitation.

Number of Houses inspected	8
Number of preliminary notices served under Public Health Acts	6
Number of Statutory Notices served under Public Health Acts	1

Chief defects that have been dealt with are:—

Roof repairs and made watertight.
Lavatory Pans renewed.
Choked drains.
Stoves and cooking appliances renewed.
General repairs to walls, floors and ceilings.
Improvement of domestic water supplies.

Few Public Health nuisances have occurred in the Borough during the year and those which have occurred have mostly been dealt with informally and remedied.

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

Domestic refuse is collected regularly in the built-up areas of the Borough, and monthly collections are made from outlying Farms and Hamlets. Refuse is carted to the dump at Hacche Road and the dump is regularly treated for the destruction of Rodents. The Refuse Dump at Hacche Road is now incapable of receiving much more refuse, and arrangements have been made jointly with the South Molton Rural District Council for a new dump at Bailey Head Meadow where tipping will be

properly controlled, and which site will take the refuse from both Councils for a number of years.

Bakehouses.

Bakehouses are inspected periodically. With the co-operation of all owners considerable improvements have been effected or are still being carried out. Generally speaking the whole of the Bakehouses in the Borough will eventually be in good order.

Factories and Workshops.

Factories and Workshops are inspected periodically and generally are found to be kept as required by the Factory Acts. Owners have from time to time been asked to make minor improvements and have readily done so. Four Factories and Workshops have been inspected in conjunction with the Devon Fire Service, and in two Factories secondary means of escape from fire have been requested and have been provided.

Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Borough:—

Number on Register ...	...	...	...	...	14
Number of Inspections ...	...	...	...	...	17
Notices served ...	...	...	...	...	Nil

Factories in which Section 7 is enforced by the Borough:—

Number on Register ...	...	...	...	...	24
Number of Inspections ...	...	...	...	...	26
Notices served ...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Cases in which defects were found and remedied ...	...	...	...	...	4

Meat and Foods condemned as unfit for human consumption.

Unsound food including meat is surrendered by Traders and a Certificate is given. The unsound food is marked with a green dye and is given to persons to boil for poultry and pig food.

The following foods have been surrendered as unfit for human consumption:—

Meat and Offal:—

English Beef ...	...	...	...	...	151 lbs.
Imported Beef ...	...	...	...	...	34 lbs.
Veal ...	...	...	...	...	12 lbs.
Mutton ...	...	...	...	...	118½lbs.

<i>Tinned Foods</i>	<i>No. of Tins</i>				<i>Weight</i>
Meat	46	91 lbs.	6 ozs.		
Vegetables	41	37 lbs.	14 ozs.		
Fruits	145	152 lbs.	1 ozs.		
Milk	30 (Approx.	90 pts.)			
Jams	9	69 lbs.	0 ozs.		
Fish	13	5 lbs.	12 ozs.		

Other Foods

Bacon	1 lbs.	15 ozs.
Sausages	3 lbs.	8 ozs.

Total weight of food surrendered and accepted as unfit for human consumption: 6 cwts. 1 qr. 7 lbs.

Inspection of Food Premises.

The Council have adopted the Food Handling Byelaws and during the year a number of visits were made to Food Premises in the Borough, and the condition generally was found to be good. All premises requiring registration receive regular visits and all are maintained in good condition. Some improvements have been made by Traders at the request of the Department.

Ice Cream

Only one firm in the Borough manufactures Ice Cream and samples taken have been entirely satisfactory.

Slaughterhouses.

No Slaughter Houses are in use in the Borough.

Meat Inspection.

Supplies of meat for the Borough come from Barnstaple where it is examined by the Borough Sanitary Inspector and his staff before leaving the Abattoir. Any butcher who considers he has meat which he considers to be unfit for sale reports the fact to my Department and appropriate action is taken. Any unsound meat is usually sent to the Kennels of Local Staghounds.

Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919 and Orders.

The following methods for the destruction of Rats and Mice are taken: The Refuse Tip at Hacche Road, the Sewage Outfalls at Mole Bridge and West End Terrace are periodically treated

by pre-baiting and then with poisoned baits and the results are satisfactory. A number of private houses and business premises have been visited on receipt of complaints, and disinfestation has been carried out.

I have again to acknowledge with thanks the help Mr. Nex has given me during the year in connection with the investigation of sanitary complaints, water sampling and chlorination, inspection of food premises, inspection of unsound meat and foods, and in numerous other matters.

His courteous approach to traders and others has resulted in complaints being dealt with and improvements to premises being obtained in a friendly and informal manner, and he is in every way a most conscientious and hardworking assistant.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

HAROLD SETTLE,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

H. G. SNOW, PRINTER, SOUTH MOLTON